

## **TRAINING BENEFITS OVERVIEW**

### **Background –**

The Training Benefits law was passed by the 2000 Legislature and amended by the 2002 session of the State Legislature.

Statutory Authority for Training Benefits contained in the following rules and regulations:

- RCW 50.22.130 and RCW 50.22.150
- WAC 192-270

### **Training Benefits Basics —**

An ongoing program to provide additional unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to qualified dislocated workers.

Training Benefit law allows:

- Obligation of \$20 million in Training Benefits per year beginning each July 1.
- Any funds not obligated are carried over to the next year.
- Up to 52 weeks of UI benefits (minus any regular and state extended benefits paid) for qualified dislocated workers in approved full-time training.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

1. If a claimant is eligible to receive 26 times their weekly benefit amount (WBA), training benefits would be for an additional 26 times the WBA, for a total of 52 times the WBA.
2. If a claimant receives only 22 times their WBA, training benefits would be for an additional 30 times the WBA, for a total of 52 times the WBA.

### **Specific Requirements—**

#### **RCW 50.22.130 - Intent**

It is the intent of the legislature that a Training Benefits program be established to provide UI benefits to unemployed individuals who participate in training programs necessary for their re-employment.

The legislature further intends that this program serve the following goals:

- Retraining should be available for those unemployed individuals whose skills are no longer in demand.
- To be eligible, an individual must have a long-term attachment to the labor force.
- Training must enhance the individual's marketable skills and earning power.
- Retraining must be targeted to those industries or skills that are in high demand within the labor market.
- Individuals for whom suitable employment is available are not eligible for additional benefits while participating in training.

#### RCW 50.22.150 - Eligibility Requirements

Must be a dislocated worker as defined in RCW 50.04.075, which says that to be eligible an individual must:

- Have been terminated or received a notice of termination from employment.
- Be eligible for or have exhausted entitlement to UI benefits.
- Be unlikely to return to employment in their principal occupation or previous industry because of a diminishing demand for the individual's skills in that occupation or industry.

Must have "tenure" in a specific occupation or in work using a specific skill set.

- "*Tenure*" means earning a plurality of wages in a particular occupation or using a particular skill set during the base year and at least two of the four 12-month periods immediately preceding the base year.
- "*Plurality of wages*" means the largest proportion of wages earned within a particular occupation or skill set. These wages must be earned in the base year; and at least two of the four 12-month periods preceding the base year.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

Base Year = 1/1/04 – 12/31/04  
 Plus = 1/1/03 – 12/31/03  
       1/1/02 – 12/31/02  
       1/1/01 – 12/31/01  
       1/1/00 – 12/31/00

Must be determined to need job-related training to find suitable work in their labor market or labor market to which willing to move or commute to work.

Occupation or skills must be in decline as determined by the local Workforce Development Council (WDC).

Must develop an individual training plan that is submitted for approval within 60 days of being notified by ESD of the requirements for Training Benefits.

- Claimants are considered to be notified when they receive their Unemployment Claims Kit booklet which contains Training Benefits information.
- The 60-day timeframe starts the date the application for UI benefits is filed, plus 5 days mailing time for Unemployment Claims Kit.
- If a claimant re-opens a claim after working, the 60-day timeframe starts again.

Must enter approved training within 90 days after being notified by ESD of the requirements for Training Benefits. If training is not available within the 90-day timeframe, the individual must enter training as soon as it is available. If a claimant re-opens a claim after working, the 90-day timeframe starts again.

Must enroll in approved training on a full-time basis as determined by the educational institution.

Must make satisfactory progress in training as certified by the educational institution.

For Training Benefits, a training program means a vocational training program at an educational institution that:

- Is targeted for a high demand occupation.
- Is likely to enhance the individual's marketable skills and earning power.
- Has been approved by the WorkForce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Individuals cannot be approved for Training Benefits if they:

- Expect to be recalled to their regular employer (standby).
- Have a definite recall date that is within six months from the date of their layoff.
- Are unemployed due to a regular seasonal layoff.
- Have received Training Benefits within the last 5 years.

## Definitions -

- *"Is targeted for a high demand occupation"* means it has been identified by the local WDC as being in demand in the local labor market.
- *"Is likely to enhance the individual's marketable skills and earning power"* means comparing what employment prospects would be if training was not approved.
- *"Has been approved by the WorkForce Training and Education Coordinating Board"* means the school and program meet the performance criteria developed by the WorkForce Training and Education Coordinating Board and is on their Eligible Training Provider List.

## Training Benefits Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) -

Q. Where are the lists of occupations that are in decline or demand?

A. The WDC lists of demand/decline occupations are found on the Internet at: [www.wilma.org/wdclists/](http://www.wilma.org/wdclists/)

Q. Where is the list of Eligible Training Providers and Programs certified by the WorkForce Training and Education Coordinating Board?

A. The list of approved training providers and programs can be found on the Internet at: [www.wtb.wa.gov/etp/](http://www.wtb.wa.gov/etp/)

Q. Where can a person get a Training Benefits Application?

A. Training Benefits applications are available at WorkSource Offices and Affiliates, most community colleges and on the Internet at: [tbapp.go2ui.com](http://tbapp.go2ui.com)

Note: Other FAQ's can be found on the Internet at: [tbfaq.go2ui.com](http://tbfaq.go2ui.com)

## Contact Information —

- Claimants & Staff: CAT/TB Unit: Toll Free [1-877-600-7701](tel:1-877-600-7701)
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